

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed are viral variants exhibiting reduced sensitivity to particular agents including nucleoside analogues and immunological mediators such as immunoglobulins and immune
5 cells. Also provided are hepatitis B virus (HBV) variants which exhibit a level of replication fitness in the presence of a nucleoside analogue similar to or greater than in the absence of the nucleoside analogue. The present invention also provides methods of treating HBV infection, including a method for identifying a need to change or otherwise alter an existing therapeutic regimen. Also disclosed are methods for monitoring the development in a subject of an
10 increased HBV load in the presence of a nucleoside analogue. The present invention further provides the use of nucleoside analogue-resistant HBV variants which exhibit a similar or increased replication fitness in the presence of the nucleoside analogue compared to in the absence of the nucleoside analogue to screen for medicaments to treat HBV infection.

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